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CGE
MYSTIC
Tony Bedard
Fabrizio Fiorentino
Matt Ryan
Wil Quintana
FIORENTINO
Ryan
Crossley

CIRESS

is a world where magic dominates every aspect of daily life. For centuries, seven Guilds of magic have presided over this enchanted globe, owing much to the **Eternal Spirits** of their original Guild Masters. Living on as ethereal phantoms, each Eternal Spirit provided their Guild's current Master with timeless wisdom and sorcerous knowledge.

This ancient balance of power was shattered on the day **Genevieve Villard** was to become Master of the Nouveau Guild. At Gen's Rite of Ascension, a mysterious stranger imprinted a mystical sigil on the palm of her rebellious sister, **Giselle**. When the Sigil's power drew all seven Eternal Spirits into Giselle, a turbulent new era dawned for Ciress. Granted vast magical might, Giselle Villard reluctantly became the most powerful Mystic her world has ever known!

RECENTLY:

Giselle's campaign to earn the respect of the various Guilds and learn their magical secrets is in full swing. Having successfully won over the Nouveau, Shaman, and Djinn Guilds, Giselle sets her sights on the most unpredictable and whimsical school of mysticism on Ciress: the Astral Guild...

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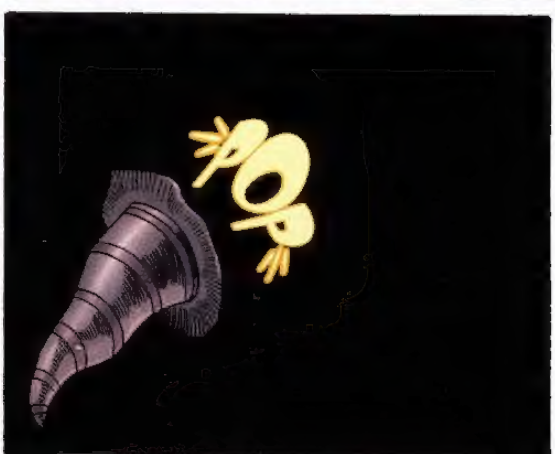
AS YOU CAN SEE, THERE'S NOTHING IN MY HAT. CORRECT?

SURE. BUT IF YOU PULL A RASPLIT OUT OF THAT THING I AM GONNA BE SO DISAPPOINTED.
JUST HANG ON. THIS GETS GOOD...

Uh-oh... WHERE DID IT GO...?

Whoaaaaaaaa
PIET--!

SHWFFFFF



FWOOOOM
YAAAAHH!
AAIIIEEE!
FRIVOLOUS FRITTERS, PIET! THAT WAS *GREAT!*
THANKS, JASPER. I CAN'T WAIT TO TRY IT OUT ON MASTER MONDRU...

EXCUSE ME, BUT... THAT DIDN'T MAKE ANY *SENSE*.
WELL, *OF COURSE* IT DIDN'T. THAT'S THE WHOLE *POINT*.
YOU MUST BE *NEW* TO THE ASTRAL LANDS.
YOU SEE, AROUND HERE WE STRIVE FOR THE *ABSURD* IN OUR --
NO. IT DOESN'T *ADD UP*. HOW COULD THAT *HAT* ACCOMODATE YOUR WHOLE *ARM*, MUCH LESS THE ENTIRE WORLD?
AND WHY DID IT SPIT YOU BACK OUT IF THERE WAS NO ONE LEFT TO *COMMAND* IT?
Y'KNOW, IF YOU *SPELL OUT* A JOKE IT STOPS BEING *FUNNY*, SO JUST LET ME SHOW YOU THE TRICK AGAIN...
eh. SORRY, NO.
THAT DOESN'T WORK FOR ME.
CHK

YOU'RE ON *HIATUS*, FELLAS. MAYBE I'LL FIGURE OUT A WAY TO RET-CON YOU LATER, BUT RIGHT NOW YOU'RE JUST *NOT* FITTING IN.
WH--?
NFF!
...C'NT... MVV...
...WH... H'PPND...?
CHK
YUP. LOTTA WORK TO DO HERE. GONNA DEFINITELY HAVE TO *REORGANIZE*...

I GOTTA HAND IT TO YA, MAJORDOMO, ASTRAL CITY LOOKS TOTALLY *GREAT!*
DID YOU REALLY *REBUILD* AFTER THE WAR WITH ANIMORA, OR IS IT JUST AN *ILLUSION?*
Oh, it's **real,** all right. See, things are a bit more... **fluid** in this realm than on the rest of Ciress, so they're harder to permanently damage.
YOUR SQUIT SPEAKS *TRUE,* GISELLE VILLARD.
SKITTER...? I THOUGHT YOU DIDN'T LIKE TO LET STRANGERS *KNOW* YOU COULD TALK?
Just the ones it freaks out. Around **here,** a talking squit won't even raise an **eyebrow.**
SHOULD IT?
GISELLE VILLARD, I PRESENT YOU *MASTER MONDRU* OF THE *ASTRAL GUILD!*
Lemme know when you're **done,** kid. I'm gonna get Major here ta fix me a sandwich...

THANK YOU FOR RECEIVING ME, MASTER MONDRU. I TRUST MASTERS ZAI AND ATYAAH TOLD YOU ABOUT MY VISITS TO THEIR GUILDS...?
...
MASTER MONDRU...?
Aw, C'MON! YOU'RE THE *LAST* GUILD MASTER I EXPECTED TO GIVE ME THE *COLD SHOULDER!*
XAVL
⇒GASP⇐
OUT *HERE*, GISELLE.
YOU REQUESTED A TOUR OF MY LANDS? YOU WANTED TO LEARN OUR WAYS AND OUR VALUES? *THIS* IS THE BEST WAY TO FIND OUT.
THIS IS *ASTRAL PROJECTION.*

UMMM... I'M NOT SO KEEN ON LEAVING MY BODY BEHIND LIKE THIS...
THAT'S THE LEAST OF WHAT YOU NEED TO LEAVE BEHIND, GIRL! NOW, ARE YOU HERE TO LEARN, OR AREN'T YOU?
BECAUSE I LOVE A GOOD JEST, BUT I DO NOT KID AROUND WITH THE CRAFT OF CALAMITOUS CONJURING!

...SUSPECT WAS SEEN BREAKIN' AND ENTERIN' THE PREMISES BY THREE WITNESSES, NONE A WHO SAID THEY--
WANTED
DEVEREAUX

"NONE OF WHOM."
?
OKAY... AND I'M ABOUT TA SLAP THE SMUG OUTTA WHOM...?

JEAN DUMONT, NOUVEAU NEWSBREAK. AND YOU ARE DETECTIVE DEVEREAUX, IF I'M NOT MISTAKEN...?
A REPORTER, huh? WHADDAYA WANT?

NOT SO LONG AGO, YOU CAUGHT A CASE INVOLVING A CROOKED VICE DETECTIVE NAMED MANION--WHO WAS THEN MISTAKENLY RELEASED. HE'S BEEN MISSING EVER SINCE.
I GOT NOTHIN' FOR YOU, PAL. YOU WANT MANION, I'D SUGGEST DRAGGIN' THE BAY.

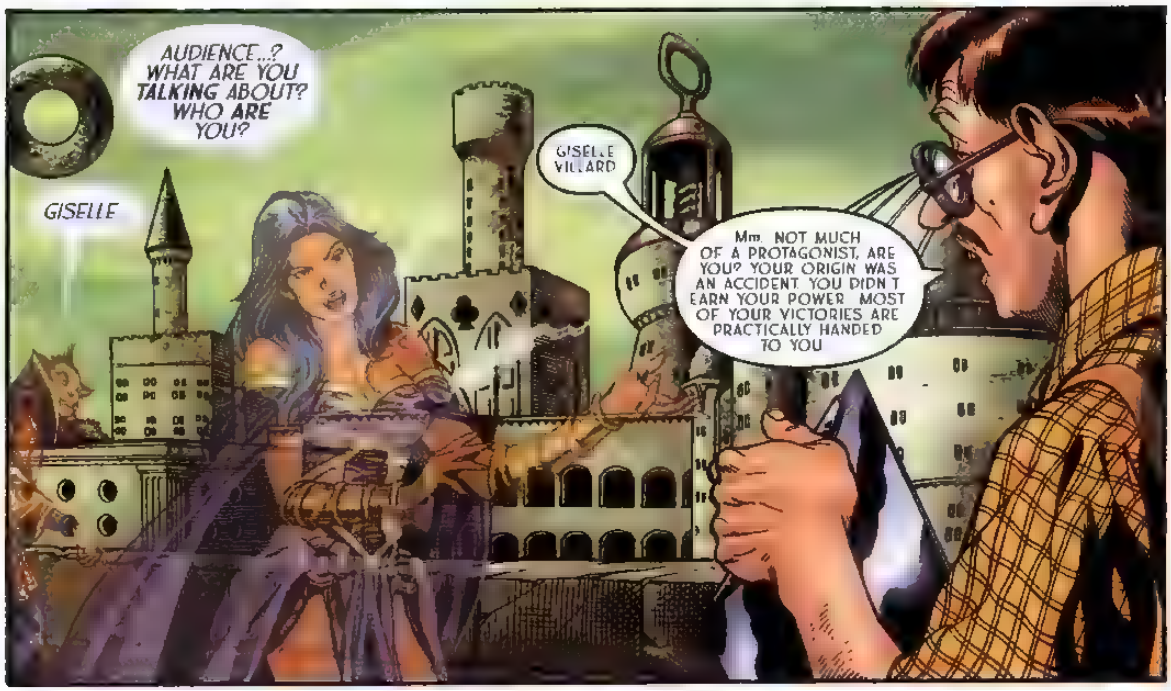
ACTUALLY, I'M MORE INTERESTED IN A CERTAIN YOUNG LADY WHO WAS INVOLVED WITH THAT CASE.

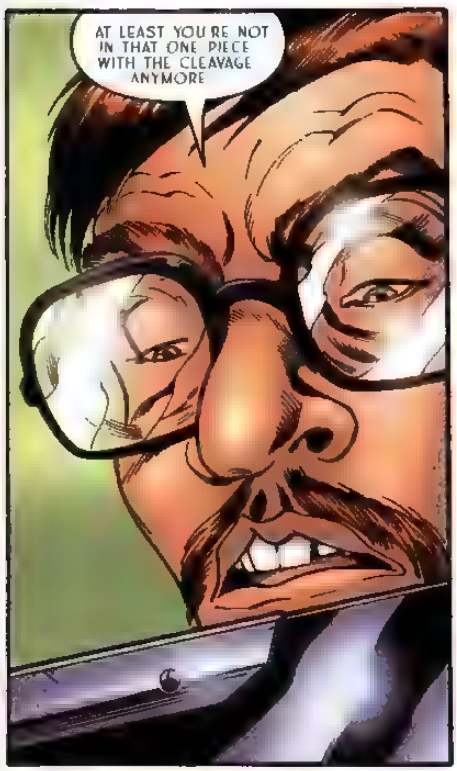
HER FACE DON'T RING A BELL
REAL-LY IT SHOULD
THAT'S GISELLE VILLARD, THE NOUVEAU MASTER'S SISTER.
THE OFFICIAL LINE IS SHE COULDN'T CONJURE A COLD IF YOU GAVE HER A HAT AND A WAND
BUT I'VE INTERVIEWED TEN EYEWITNESSES WHO SWEAR SHE WAS THE ONE WHO DEFEATED ANIMORA, AND SOME WHO SAY SHE DISAPPEARED DUKE ABADDON
I KNOW YOU USED HER AS AN INFORMANT DURING THE MANION CASE TELL ME, HOW DOES A GUILD ACADEMY DROPOUT WIELD THAT KIND OF JUICE?
YOU NEED TO GO NOW SOON AS I FIND OUT WHOM YOUR SOURCE IS, I'LL MAKE YA BOTH WISH YOU'D NEVER MET.
KRESH
SEVEN YEARS OF BAD LUCK, DETECTIVE

NICE PLACE TO VISIT, BUT I DON'T THINK I COULD LIVE HERE SOME OF THIS TRIPPY STUFF IS STARTING TO GIVE ME A HEADACHE
THAT'S BECAUSE YOU CLING SO DESPERATELY TO THE STRUCTURE YOUR MIND IMPOSES UPON REALITY.
BUT ALL THOSE ASSUMPTIONS YOU CHERISH ABOUT THE WAY THINGS ARE WON'T HELP YOU HERE
DON'T CONFUSE YOUR PRECONCEPTIONS WITH TRUE REALITY--AS MY OWN MASTER WAS FOND OF SAYING, "THE MAP IS NOT THE TERRITORY
THE TEACHINGS OF THE ASTRAL GUILD UNCLENCH YOUR MIND GET YOU OUTSIDE YOURSELF
LITERALLY
YES IT'S THE BEST WAY TO OPEN UP THE MYRIAD POSSIBILITIES YOU MIGHT OTHERWISE IGNORE. AND YOU KNOW SOMETHING ?
LIFE IS JUST PLAIN FUNNER ONCE YOU EMBRACE THOSE POSSIBILITIES
UM ..I DON'T THINK 'FUNNER' IS A REAL WORD.
-SIGH- SEE, THAT'S EXACTLY WHAT I'M TALKING ABOUT---!

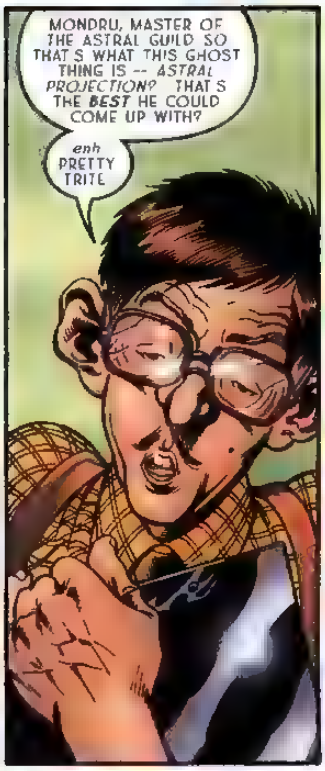
DO YOU KNOW WHAT A "DEAD" LANGUAGE IS? IT'S WHERE ALL THE RULES OF GRAMMAR ARE SET IN STONE, WHERE THERE IS NO LONGER ANY INNOVATION
THE LANGUAGE WE SPEAK IS ALIVE AND VITAL BECAUSE I SAY SOMETHING IS FUNNER,' OR YOU SAY SOMETHING S "TRIPPY
OR A MAN CALLS YOU "BABELICIOUS,' AND YOU UNDERSTAND!
JUST AS YOU'VE LEFT YOUR BODY BEHIND, LEAVE THE OLD RULES BEHIND -- THEY RE A TRAP. THEY'RE SHACKLES.
BE OPEN TO THE POSSIBILITY THAT A BEGGAR COULD BE GOD IN DISGUISE.
...OR A NURSERY RHYME COULD BE A MASTER SPELL.
OR A MIDDLE-AGED SORCERER WITH A FUNNY MUSTACHE COULD BE THE MOST ATTRACTIVE MAN I'VE EVER MET
GOTCHA
HOOK, LINE AND SINKER.

WHEN YOU LET YOUR IMAGINATION RUN WILD WHAT? WHAT'S WRONG?
LOOK
NOTHING
WHAT KIND OF MAGIC IS THIS?
NO MAGIC JUST ME
I HATE MAGIC BY THE WAY THE RULES ARE NEVER CONSISTENT IT'S NOT FAIR TO THE AUDIENCE


AUDIENCE...? WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT? WHO ARE YOU?
GISELLE
GISELLE VILLARD
Mm. NOT MUCH OF A PROTAGONIST, ARE YOU? YOUR ORIGIN WAS AN ACCIDENT. YOU DIDN'T EARN YOUR POWER. MOST OF YOUR VICTORIES ARE PRACTICALLY HANDED TO YOU


AT LEAST YOU'RE NOT IN THAT ONE PIECE WITH THE CLEAVAGE ANYMORE

Um DO YOU SPEAK "GOOFBALL" ANY BETTER THAN ME, MONDRU?
GISELLE, WE SHOULD LEAVE RIGHT NOW. WE'RE A LITTLE VULNERABLE IN OUR ASTRAL FORMS


MONDRU, MASTER OF THE ASTRAL GUILD SO THAT'S WHAT THIS GHOST THING IS -- ASTRAL PROJECTION? THAT'S THE BEST HE COULD COME UP WITH?
enh PRETTY TRITE

MONDRU?!
CHK

OKAY, SOMEHOW, YOU'VE GOT THE ASTRAL GUILD'S NUMBER, BUT I'LL BET YOU'RE NOT SO HOT AGAINST A DIFFERENT BRAND OF MAGIC--
--SAY, NOUVEAU GUILD .OR DJINN GUILD
...OR SHAMAN!
enh.
PREDICTABLE BUT AT LEAST T S IN CONTINUITY
CHK

Whaddya mean there's no bluffing in Gork poker?!
What a stupid rule! Guess that's what ya get when you play with dumb animals
Rowff?
Uh-oh My girl's in trouble
I'm taking Giselle's bod with me, Majo
!

Villain, prepare to be des—
What the heck?! How'd you get the better of them?!
SO NOW IT'S FUNNY ANIMALS? Oh NO I DON'T THINK SO
In about two seconds you won't think I'm so funny!
How are you still standing when reality itself was close to breaking?
SIMPLE I DON'T BELIEV IN ANY OF TH'S OR YOU

Oh, BUT I USED TO! I LOVED THIS PLACE, BACK WHEN IT PLAYED BY THE RULES, BACK WHEN T WAS INTERNALLY CONSISTENT
BUT THEN THIS ANYTHING-GOES APPROACH GOT POPULAR, AND SUDDENLY YOU CAN'T TELL THE GOOD GUYS FROM THE BAD GUYS
YOU DON'T KNOW IF YOU'VE WALKED IN AT THE BEGINNING OR THE END OF THE STORY
I MEAN, WHATEVER HAPPENED TO STRUCTURE? TO CRAFT? NONE OF YOU EVEN CARE ABOUT SUCH THINGS ANYMORE
WELL, I M HERE TO PUT THINGS BACK IN ORDER - TO SAVE YOU FROM YOURSELVES!
Kid, I'm leaving this up to you, understand? So use your head!
SKITTER? HOW'D YOU..
OH, NEVER MIND -- IF YOU CAN GET ME BACK IN MY BODY, I THINK I KNOW WHAT TO DO!
YOU ALL THINK YOU RE SO CUTTING EDGE, AND YOU DON T EVEN KNOW WHAT PAGE YOU RE ON!
WE..., THAT S WHAT I M HERE FOR TO PUT YOU BACK IN YOUR PLACE!
CHK

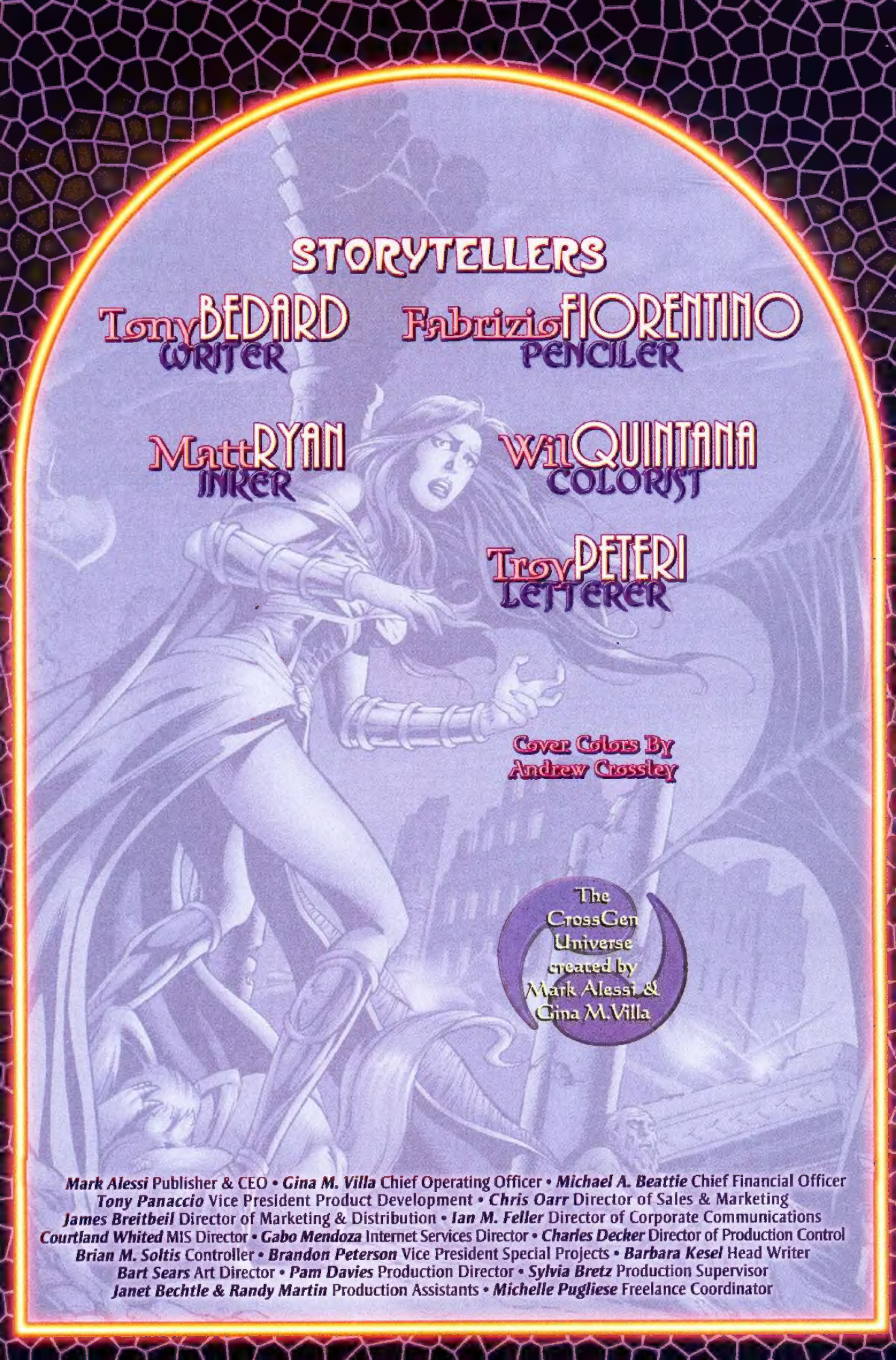
Now!
HEY! HOW D YOU DO THAT?
UNH
I HOLD IT RIGHT THERE OR OR I'LL
RELAX. I DON'T BITE, YOU KNOW. AT LEAST NOT SO IT HURTS.
WHY ARE YOU LOOKING AT ME LIKE THAT?
SMART GUY LIKE YOU NEEDS TO ASK? SURELY YOU KNOW THAT POWER IS THE ULTIMATE APHRODISIAC.

. AND YOU, MISTER, ARE THE MOST POWERFUL THING I VE EVER SEEN
I KNOW, I KNOW.. BUT TRY AND SEE IT FROM MY POINT OF VIEW
HOW GULLIBLE DO YOU THINK I AM ?
STAY FROZEN IN PLACE, OR HAVE A FLING WITH THE MAN IN CHARGE.
IT S NOT TOO TOUGH A CHOICE, IS IT?
ENH
AH—!
FWOOSH
WHAT HAVE YOU DONE?! WHAT HAVE YOU DONE?!

YOU'VE DOOMED YOURSELF, YOU KNOW! I WAS YOUR LAST
AH! YOU DID IT!
WHAT IN THE FOUR MOONS WAS HE?
I'm not sure, but I sensed his thoughts before he left...
I think you sent him back where he came from -- a sad place where nothin ever changes, and every fresh idea or event is just a rehash of what's already been done.
AND HOW DID YOU KNOW WHAT TO DO? OR GET HIM TO LET YOU IN CLOSE?
I JUST USED MY IMAGINATION AND GAMBLED THAT, EVEN IF THE PEN IS MIGHTIER THAN THE SWORD, IT CAN'T HURT YOU IF THERE'S NOTHING TO WRITE ON

AND WHAT IF IT DIDN'T WORK?
THEN I IMAGINE SOMEONE ELSE WOULD'VE HAD TO BAIL US OUT. I'M JUST GLAD I GOT THE CHANCE TO PROVE I COULD DO IT MYSELF
I knew ya could.
LOOK, I KNOW IT'S BEEN A WHILE SINCE YOU SPOKE WITH THE ETERNAL SPIRIT OF YOUR GUILD--AND I FEEL LOUSY ABOUT THAT SINCE SHE'S LOCKED UP INSIDE ME.
BUT I KNOW A WAY TO LET YOU TWO TALK--
THERE IS NO NEED FOR THAT, GISELLE VILLARD. IF, ONE DAY, YOU CAN RETURN HER TO MY SAFEKEEPING, THEN I WILL GLADLY ACCEPT THE SPIRIT OF MASTER ADAYA
UNTIL THEN, I'D RATHER JUST CONCENTRATE ON SURPASSING HER.
OKAY. IF YOU'RE SURE SHE WON'T MIND GETTING STOOD UP..
ON THE CONTRARY, GISELLE, I APPROVE.
ASTRAL SPIRIT..IS THAT YOU...?
YES, GISELLE. WE'RE BACK ON SPEAKING TERMS. I HOPE YOU'LL STAY A WHILE WITH MONDRU AND LEARN SOME SPELLS WITH HIM
YOU CONTINUE TO SURPRISE US, TO EXCEED OUR WILDEST IMAGININGS--
--AND THAT, AFTER ALL, IS WHAT THE ASTRAL GUILD IS ALL ABOUT.

DUMONT! GET YOUR SORRY BUTT IN HERE!
YEAH, BOSS?
THAT DETECTIVE YOU INTERVIEWED, WHAT WAS HIS NAME?
CLAUDE St. AUBIN EXECUTIVE PRODUCER
DETECTIVE DEVERAUX HE DIDN'T COMPLAIN OR SOMETHING, DID HE?
RIGHT ABOUT NOW I WISH HE COULD
NOUVEAU P.D. INTERNAL AFFAIRS DIVISION REPORTS THAT DEVERAUX WAS LAST SEEN EXITING THE PRECINCT HOUSE TO MEET WITH AN INFORMANT
UNOFFICIALLY, THERE ARE SEVERAL THEORIES AS TO HIS FATE, BUT NO HARD EVIDENCE POINTING TO THE WHEREABOUTS OF THE MISSING DETECTIVE. THIS IS PIERRE LaCHANCE, NOUVEAU NEWSBREAK CRIME BEAT.
DUMONT I DON'T THINK THIS WAS A COINCIDENCE WHATEVER THIS BIG STORY IS THAT YOU'RE CHASING, YOU'D BETTER WATCH YOURSELF.



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A KISS BEFORE DYING!
Issue #29
In Stores
October 9
MYSTIC
FIORENTINO
Ryan
Acrossley
Tony Bedard
Fabrizio Fiorentino
Matt Ryan
Wil Quintana

MYSSPELLINGS

PLEASE LET US KNOW IF YOU DON'T WANT YOUR NAME AND ADDRESS PRINTED. MARK YOUR E-MAILS AS "OKAY TO PRINT." LETTERS MAY BE EDITED FOR CONTENT AND LENGTH.

Hey, hey, hey, MysSpellings!

I have absolutely no negative comments. Just want to say that everything flows, though not in the way I envisioned. I have one suggestion, though. Perhaps you guys can find a way to revive the Taroc Guild? I think it'll make a good storyline, especially if the new Guild Master turns out to be Giselle's love interest.

I really hope to eventually also collect MERIDIAN and THE FIRST, but due to financial constraints I'll have to settle for the best – MYSTIC.

Looking forward to more issues!

Rock on!
John Siow
german_gas@hotmail.com

Well, you've put a new twist on a frequently heard request, John. I got a lot of letters after CHRONICLES #5 hit the stands to bring back the Taroc Guild Master, (which, now that I think of it, I suppose would also entail bringing back the Guild itself) but up until this point, none to resurrect only the Guild. I leave decisions like this primarily up to the writer, who makes them based on what's best for the story, so Tony Bedard is the guy you'd have to convince. We do have a lot of functioning Guilds on Ciress already though, which we haven't even begun to explore yet, and it does seem like a lot of trouble to go through just to provide Giselle with a boyfriend, especially since her track record seems to indicate that she doesn't need a lot of help getting a man. Now, if you're talking getting a good man, that's another story...

❖

Dear Giselle Villard:

I enjoyed the way MYSTIC #26 starts off by giving us the background information about the chiwanda, a predator that stalks in the plane of animal spirits and every so often can cross over into the reality of Ciress and cause havoc. It isn't until page 4 that Giselle Villard appears and explains to an understandably hesitant Master Zai what she's doing there and how she was stuck between a rock and a hard place before and had to commit the acts upon the Shaman for a good reason. I didn't know what action the Shaman was going to take next. Then, Giselle finds herself as bait for the chiwanda. Was she tricked by the Shaman? Was she deceived? I thought she was, until I saw the Shaman work with her step-by-step in defeating a creature that has taken her greatest fear and made it real – a fear whose roots lie deep in her relationship with her sister Gen. The whole story was spectacular and the artwork made the story even better!

Sincerely yours,
Paul Dale Roberts
Elk Grove, CA
Silhouet98@cs.com

Tony is really getting into some interesting stuff with Giselle these days, isn't he Paul? We're going to see her learn quite a lot about herself as well as the Guilds before this arc is done, and I'd say it's about time. The team sends their thanks for your support.

❖

Hello,

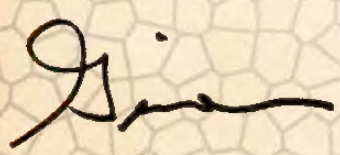
I just wanted to write to you to tell you how much I enjoy MYSTIC. I have been buying this comic since it first came out. When I first saw it and looked through it, it just grabbed me. I liked the storyline, the art, and especially the character Giselle. I like the way she keeps getting into trouble and how she gets out. And now, in issue #26, she is going around and actually learning

about each Guild. It's about time she grew up and started finding out what she really has.

I do have a question. Have you ever considered getting together with a manufacturer and coming up with some action figures of the characters from MYSTIC? I would like to see a 9"-12" figure of Giselle with her pet, Skitter. It should have real clothes and be fairly well articulated, say 8 to 12 points. And then there is her sister, Gen, and her enemies, Animora and Darrow. I collect action figures of my favorite comics or TV shows and I think that this would be a good idea. Anyway, keep up the good work.

Thanks,
Kim Ogier
kogier@hotmail.com

Kim, action figures are certainly something that we've considered, since yours is not the first letter we've had that mentions them. But, as in all things around here, we want to be sure we give our fans a quality product – and not-so-incidentally – be sure we have a strong market for it, as well. I think the best chance you have of seeing action figures is as a tie-in to the MYSTIC TV show. Who knows, the way we've been going action figures might be right around the corner!



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MYSTIC (in the subject line)

CROSSCURRENTS

by Gina Villa

Welcome to our new combined letters column and company news pages. We think the new design is pretty snazzy...what do all of you think? Be sure to write and tell us. While I'm waiting for those letters, let me bring you up to speed on some of the latest developments here at CrossGen.

On the media front, some of the biggest names in Hollywood have begun associating themselves with CrossGen TV and film projects. **Chuck Russell,** whose last blockbuster was *The Scorpion King*, announced at Comic-Con International in San Diego that he will tackle WAY OF THE RAT as his next project. Chuck said he will be both writing the screenplay and directing the feature film. After that, he's said he is also committed to a feature film of SCION. **Robert Zemeckis,** the Academy Award® winning director of *Forrest Gump*, *What Lies Beneath* and *Back to the Future* fame, announced through his company ImageMovers that he will be directing a feature film of ROUTE 666. In addition, **Larry Kasanoff,** famous for the *Mortal Kombat* franchise, said he aims to turn SIGIL and SAURIANS into a weekly television show, hopefully for Fall 2003. Cornerstone Animation, named one of the "top 10 companies to watch in 2002" by Animation Magazine, also announced its intention to bring MERIDIAN to animated life on the big screen.

CG Entertainment will be publishing a number of high-profile comics beginning in November 2002 when the acclaimed, Eisner-nominated THE RED STAR joins us as an affiliate. R. A. Salvatore's DEMONWARS, a Code 6 property, will be next out of the chute, in December, and another affiliate, Hurricane's JOHN CARPENTER'S THE SNAKE PLISSKEN CHRONICLES, will follow in 2003. Up to four additional projects will be announced for publication in the near future.

CROSSGENERATION COMICS, INC. RECOMMENDED GOOD READ!

Recommended R Reads

by CrossGen inker Roland Paris

Strangers in Paradise, published by Abstract Studios, written and illustrated by Terry Moore.

Terry Moore has quietly and humbly created one of the best ongoing series ever published. If you are looking for a comic that doesn't have one-dimensional characters, look no further! After only a few pages, Katchoo, Francine, and David are a part of you. They become your friends and you care about them deeply. So, that covers the writing end and if that was all that Terry Moore had to offer, it would be more than enough. But it's not. Thanks to an animation background, Mr. Moore has the uncanny ability to render distinct, real-looking characters. Through his art, he is able to express the characters' love, hate, happiness, and sorrow – without a single word ballon or caption box. If you do not currently read this series, do yourself a favor. Pick it up. Give it a shot. I promise you will not be sorry.